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**PULASKI ACADEMY STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® ARKANSAS FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 1, 2011) — In its 27th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPNHS, today announced Fredi Knighten of Pulaski Academy as its 2011-12 Gatorade Arkansas Football Player of the Year. Knighten is the second Gatorade Arkansas Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Pulaski Academy.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Knighten as Arkansas' best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Knighten joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Wes Welker (1999-00, Heritage Hall HS, Okla.), Terrell Suggs (1999-00, Hamilton HS, Ariz.), Anquan Boldin (1998-99, Pahokee HS, Fla.) and Jerome Bettis (1989-90, Mackenzie HS, Mich.).

The 5-foot-11, 190-pound senior quarterback has led the Bruins to a 12-0 record and a berth in the Class 4A semifinals against Dollarway High, scheduled for Dec. 2. Knighten has passed for 3,920 yards and 60 touchdowns through 12 games, completing 227 of 308 passes while throwing just five interceptions. He has also rushed for 824 yards and 12 touchdowns on 67 carries. Knighten was the Little Rock Touchdown Club Player of the Year in 2010.

Knighten has maintained a 3.44 GPA in the classroom. A devoted member of his church community, he has volunteered locally on behalf of youth sports leagues and a program to collect school supplies for low-income students.

"He's a dual threat, with a very good arm and great field vision," said Tim Perry, head coach of rival Nashville High. "Trying to defend him really puts you in a dilemma."

Knighten remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

The Gatorade Player of the Year program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. The selection process is administered by ESPNHS and the Gatorade high school sports leadership team, which work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Knighten joins recent Gatorade Arkansas Football Players of the Year Kiehl Frazier (2010-11, Shiloh Christian School) Michael Dyer (2009-10, Little Rock Christian Academy), Michael Dyer (2008-09, Little Rock Christian Academy) and De'Anthony Curtis (2007-08, Camden Fairview) among the state's list of former award winners.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners, and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit playeroftheyear.gatorade.com.

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